

A stylized illustration of the Palace of Westminster and Big Ben in London, viewed from across the River Thames. The buildings are rendered in a dark, almost black, silhouette-like style with some internal detail. The sky is a solid light blue. A prominent, thick, wavy red line, resembling a ribbon or a stylized smoke trail, starts from the bottom left and winds its way across the middle of the image, passing behind the buildings and ending near the top right. The title 'YOUR PARLIAMENT' is printed in a large, red, serif font across the top of the image, partially overlapping the sky and the buildings.

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YOUR PARLIAMENT

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What Parliament is

Parliament consists of the Sovereign and two Houses—The Lords and the Commons. All Bills (except money Bills) are debated in both Houses and approved by the Queen before they become Law.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

Members of this House are not elected—they are members because of their rank or office. Membership of the House of Lords is largely hereditary.



PEERS OF THE REALM

All English peers (nearly 800), Princes, dukes, marquesses, earls, viscounts, barons.

16 Scottish representative peers.

8 Irish representative peers.



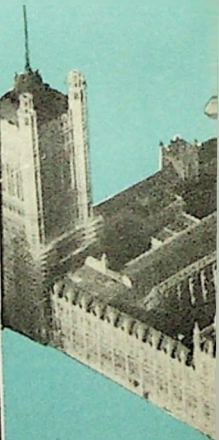
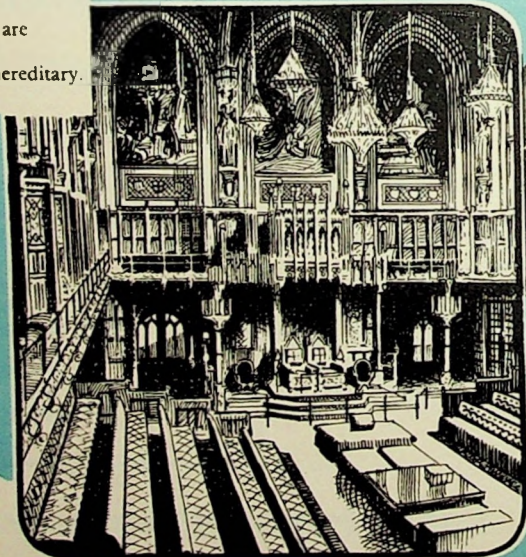
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Archbishops of Canterbury and York.
24 Senior bishops.

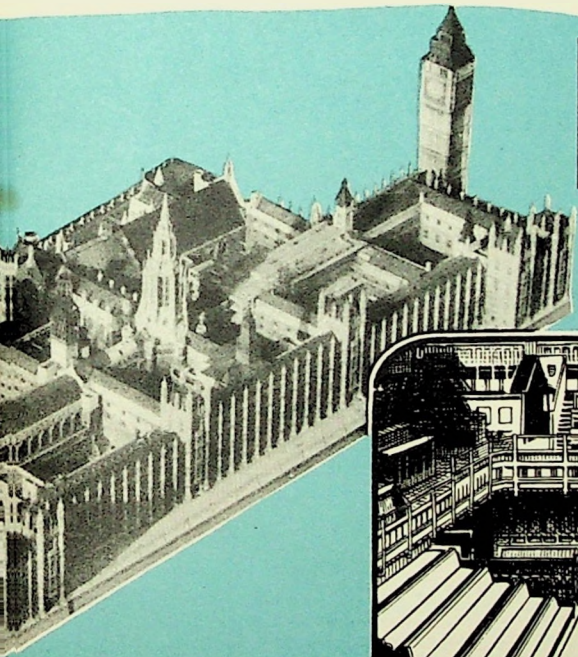


THE LORDS OF APPEAL

A small number of life peers, appointed by the Queen for the special judicial functions.

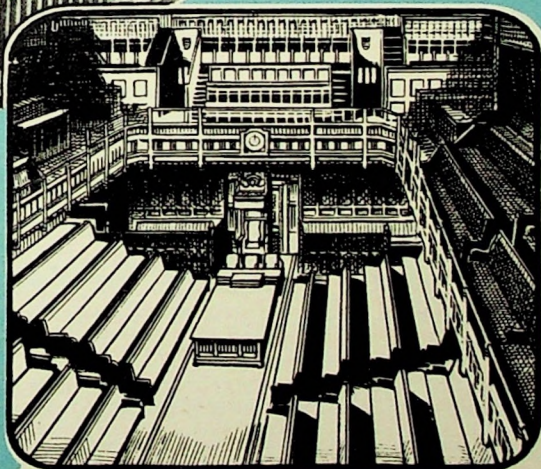


Over 800 persons are members but only about 100 are regularly active in Parliamentary affairs.

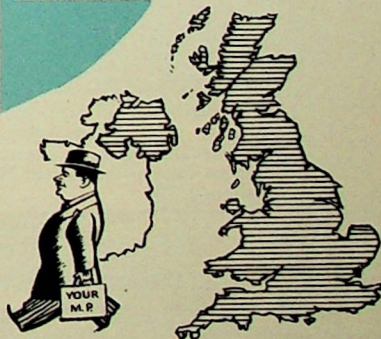


THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

All members of this House—which is now the more powerful House—are elected by the people. In other words, we the people, ultimately decide how the country shall be governed.



The United Kingdom is divided into about 600 Parliamentary Divisions, or Constituencies, each of which can elect one member of the Commons. A Commission presided over by the Speaker of the House of Commons can recommend revisions of the boundaries if there is a big change in the number of voters in a constituency.





What Parliament Does

PARLIAMENT DISCUSSES MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE AND CONTROLS THE GOVERNMENT BY DRAWING ATTENTION TO INEFFICIENCY AND INJUSTICE.

807

Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day

Wednesday 24th January

9. Miss Hornsby-Smith.—To ask the Minister of Food, what quantity of Canadian apples he has agreed to import this year; what is the average price at which his country has paid for them; and what the cash against

It discusses matters like government controls, rationing, and export problems.

10. Lord Malcolm Douglas-Hamilton.—To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he will consider remitting the purchase tax on shinty sticks.

17. Squadron Leader Burden.—To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, in view of the rearmament programme and the agreements with India, Pakistan and Ceylon, whereby the flow of unrequited exports to those countries will be considerably increased, and thus make

INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

47. Mr. Gammans asked the Prime Minister if he will consider making a personal broadcast to the British people explaining the seriousness of the international situation, appealing for the Territorial Army and for the Defence Service and warning against the obvious determination of Communists to stir up industry and disrupt the productive



KOREAN CAMPAIGN (INFORMATION)

45. Earl Winterton asked the Prime Minister if, in view of the participation of British and British Commonwealth forces in the Korean

For example, it discusses foreign and colonial policy, Commonwealth relations, and Britain's part in international organisations such as the United Nations Organisation.

...of military operations the communiques are being issued

NATIONAL COAL BOARD

3.45 p.m.
The Minister of Fuel and Power (Philip Noel-Baker): I beg to move.
"That this House takes note of the Report and Statement of Accounts of the National Coal Board for 1949."
We are to discuss today the Annual Report of the National Coal Board for 1949 was the third year of their enormous

National Service

110. Mr. Ellis Smith asked the Minister of Defence if he will now say when it is intended to end conscription.

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

Dental Technicians (Fair Wages Clause)

85. Mr. Baird asked the Minister of Health if the fair wage clause in the National Health Service General Dental

It discusses the administration of nationalised industries and other public services.



PARLIAMENT'S MOST IMPORTANT JOB IS TO CRITICISE THE GOVERNMENT AND THROW IT OUT IF A MAJORITY OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT DISAGREE WITH ITS POLICY.



PARLIAMENT MAKES LAWS THAT SET UP
AND REGULATE MANY PUBLIC SERVICES

National Boards have been set up to
provide fuel, power, transport, etc.

Local authorities are required by Parliament to
repair roads, organise fire services and police,
provide schools and other services for the citizen.

The size, equipment and
terms of service of our
defence forces are
determined by Parliament.

PARLIAMENT DECIDES WHAT TAXES SHOULD BE IMPOSED TO PAY FOR DEFENCE, SOCIAL SERVICES, THE SALARIES OF CIVIL SERVANTS AND OTHER GOVERNMENT EXPENSES



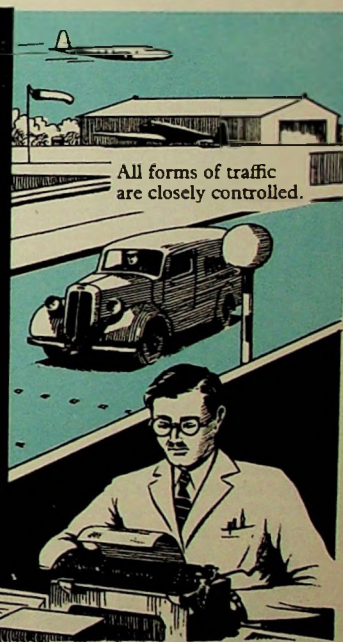
Prices of many goods and pleasures are increased by "indirect" taxation.

Earnings in the form of wages and salaries are taxed directly.

Annual licences are needed for many common things

PARLIAMENT MAKES LAWS WHICH AFFECT OUR EVERYDAY LIVES

PARLIAMENT FIXES PENALTIES
FOR BREAKING THE LAW





The Party System

People have different opinions on nearly every subject. If everyone insisted on having his own way, the country could not be governed.



Therefore, those who can agree on the major political issues have grouped themselves into parties. They can then decide the party policy, prepare a programme to show what they would do if they were in power, and work together to promote the interests of the party.

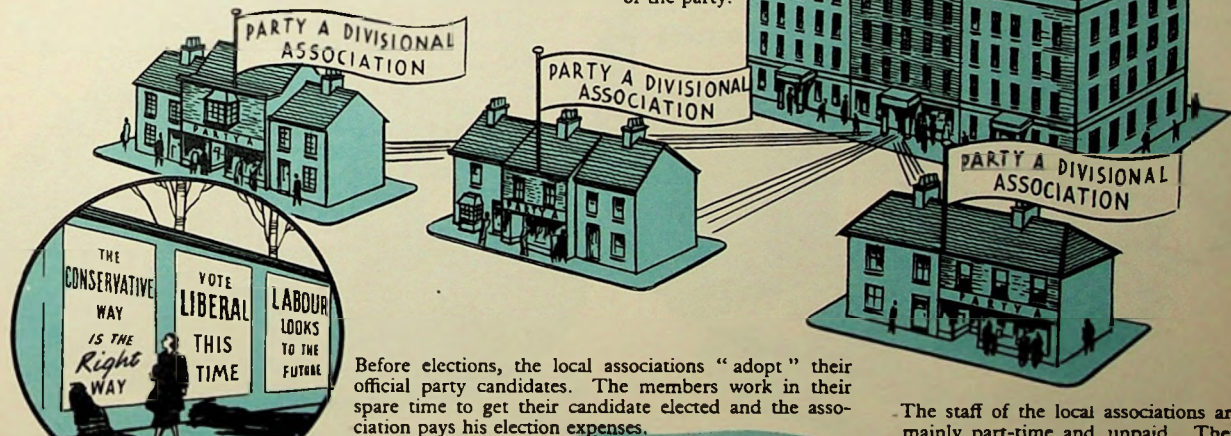


There are some people who do not support any one party. They vote for whichever candidate they prefer—perhaps on his personality or on the attitude of his party to one issue in which they are very interested.



Party Organisation

There are party headquarters in London where a full time, paid staff is employed to carry out party policy and provide national publicity about the aims and views of the party.



Before elections, the local associations "adopt" their official party candidates. The members work in their spare time to get their candidate elected and the association pays his election expenses.

Those who wish to give active support can enrol as official members of the party at local associations.

The staff of the local associations are mainly part-time and unpaid. They organise lectures, meetings, social functions, etc., to discuss the policy of the party and to raise funds. The headquarters of the party are in touch with local associations to give help and advice.





Can I be an M.P. ?



THE CANDIDATE

During nomination week he must give the returning officer £150 deposit, and a nomination form signed by 10 electors in the constituency. The deposit (which is required to prevent people standing for election without serious purpose) is returned if he gets more than one-eighth of the total number of votes cast in the constituency.

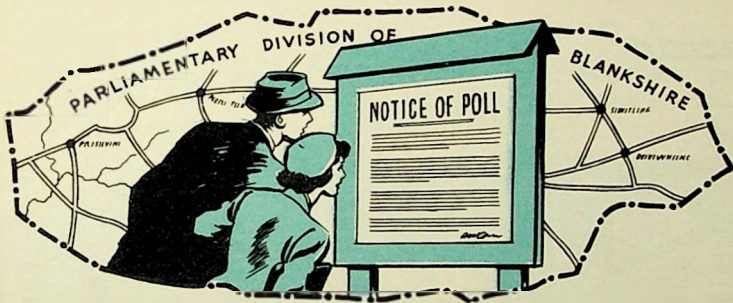
Any man or woman over 21 may stand for any constituency, provided he is not a Civil Servant (on active list), clergyman (R.C. or of the established churches), peer (Irish peer, not in Lords, can stand), or a judge. Also excluded are bankrupts, lunatics, criminals, etc.

Members of political parties in each constituency usually choose their candidates. People who do not belong to a party may also stand.



He must not threaten or bribe any elector. He must keep a record of his expenses, which by law must not exceed a certain amount (depending on the type of constituency and number of electors.)

The candidate is elected Member of Parliament if he receives more votes than any other candidate in the constituency.



The Register of Electors is usually available at the Town Hall, Public Library and main Post Office. Check that your name is on the register and if it is not, write to the local Returning Officer.

This register is compiled from periodical house to house canvasses and or a distribution of forms to be filled in by the residents and returned to the Town Hall.



Can I vote?



Any citizen over 21 can vote in the constituency where he normally lives, provided his name is on the Register of Electors. Exceptions—criminals, lunatics, and members of the House of Lords.



If you are likely to be away on Election Day, write to the Registration Officer at the Town Hall and apply to be put on the absent Voters' List. You will then receive a ballot paper enabling you to vote by post.



How do I decide?

IT IS THE DUTY OF EVERY ELECTOR TO THINK SERIOUSLY BEFORE DECIDING FOR WHOM TO VOTE. THE LEAST HE SHOULD DO IS FIND OUT—

What the parties stand for

LISTEN

to all party broadcasts

In party broadcasts you can hear leading members of the parties expound the merits of their own proposals, and criticise their opponents' proposals.

The official party Election manifestoes, obtainable from party committee rooms and bookstalls explain the basic aims of the parties, and what they propose to do if elected to power.

READ

each party's manifesto.



What the candidates stand for

LISTEN

to each candidate in person

Some electors vote on party consideration alone. Electors should, however, find out about the candidates themselves. Each candidate usually sends out an election address, stating what he stands for. These should be carefully studied, and supplemented by visits to local meetings, to see, hear and question each candidate.

READ

reports of meetings in your local papers.

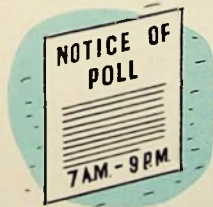
READ

each candidate's election address





Local notices tell you where to vote



Election Day



(1) The poll clerk crosses your name off the register and hands you a ballot paper with the names of all candidates.



(2) In a screened polling booth you mark X against the candidate of your choice.

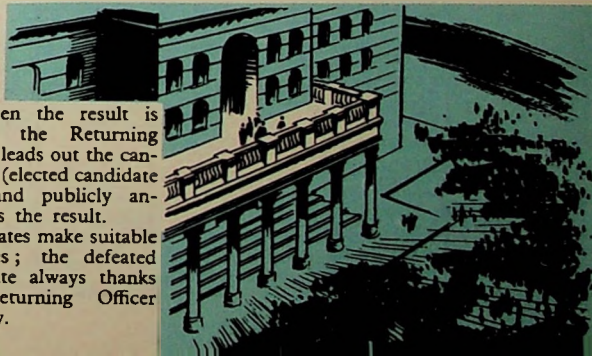


(3) You fold the paper, and drop it in a locked ballot box.

(4) At the close of the poll, all ballot boxes are taken to one centre, unlocked, and the votes counted. Candidates, their agents, and others who have permission of the Returning Officer, supervise the counting of the votes. If voting is close, a recount may be demanded.



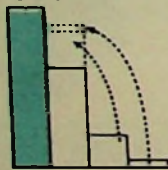
(5) When the result is settled, the Returning Officer leads out the candidates (elected candidate first) and publicly announces the result. Candidates make suitable speeches; the defeated candidate always thanks the Returning Officer publicly.





Forming a Government

The leader of the party with the largest number of Members in the Commons is usually summoned by the Queen and invited to form a Government. If the winning party has an absolute majority over all other parties, the job is straightforward.



WINNING PARTY HAS
ABSOLUTE MAJORITY



WINNING PARTY HAS
NOT ABSOLUTE MAJORITY

If no party has an absolute majority, it may be necessary to form a minority or a coalition Government. A minority Government is one that has to depend on the support of another party. This may involve some modification of the Government party's programme.

In times of National Crisis, such as war, the majority parties may agree on a joint programme and form a Coalition Government. This normally involves a "truce" in party politics, and ministerial posts are held by members of all participating parties.

The party leader (who becomes Prime Minister) decides which of his supporters shall be Ministers, in charge of the various Departments of State, and submits the list to the Queen for her approval.



From the Ministers the Prime Minister chooses those who will form the Cabinet (usually 16-20).



The Cabinet meets in private, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, and is responsible for general policy of the Government.

Among the Cabinet Ministers nowadays are usually the Lord President of the Council, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Lord Chancellor, the Secretaries of State for Home Affairs, Foreign Affairs, the Colonies, Commonwealth Relations, and Scotland, Ministers of Defence, Education, Health, Labour, and Agriculture and Fisheries, and the President of the Board of Trade. Ministers have unpaid Parliamentary private secretaries (who are also M.P.s) to assist them.

Ministers not in the Cabinet at present include the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Secretaries of State for War and Air, the Ministers of Transport, Food, Supply, Works, National Insurance, Fuel and Power, Pensions, and the Postmaster-General. The Attorney-General and the other Law Officers have the status of Ministers.



Ministers have to divide their time between supervising their own departments and their duties in Parliament.



Ministers (who are politicians) are in charge of their departments, but they usually consult the permanent officials. They are responsible for every action of their officials and can be questioned in the House about anything done in their departments.

Head offices of most Departments of State are in London, many in Whitehall, but there are also many government offices in different parts of the country. They are staffed by Civil Servants who carry out the policies decided by the Government. Civil Servants are permanent officers and do not change with each new Government.

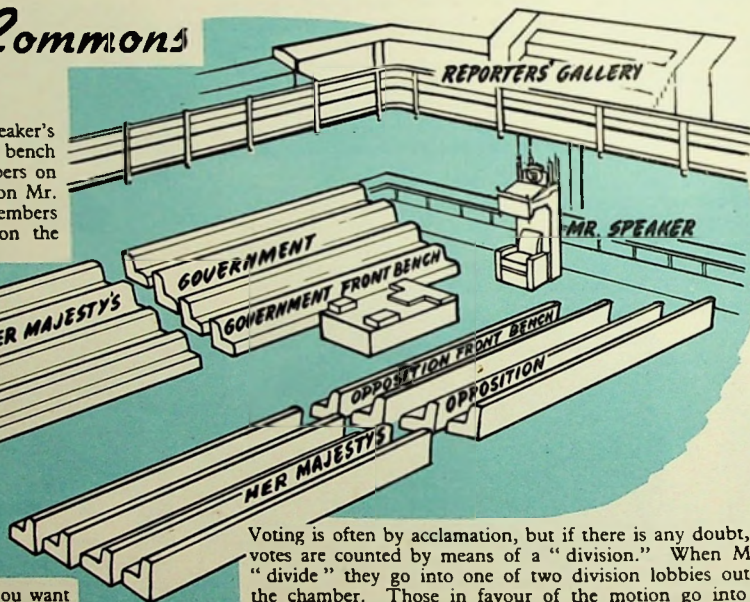
The House of Commons

SEATING

The Government Party sit on Mr. Speaker's right, Cabinet Ministers on the front bench called the Treasury Bench, other Members on the back benches. The Opposition sit on Mr. Speaker's left, the Leader and senior Members on the front bench, other Members on the back benches.

The Bar of the House (a line on the floor) marks the official entrance of the House of Commons.

Parliament is open to the public. If you want to visit the House of Commons, write to your M.P. for a ticket well beforehand—and enclose a stamped addressed envelope.



Voting is often by acclamation, but if there is any doubt, the votes are counted by means of a "division." When M.P.s "divide" they go into one of two division lobbies outside the chamber. Those in favour of the motion go into the "AYE" lobby, those against into the "NO" lobby. Members from each party are appointed to act as "tellers" to count the voters for and against.

Mr. Speaker is appointed by the House of Commons and not by the Government. Once elected he takes no part in party politics, resigns from any political club to which he may belong, and is never seen in the Smoking Room of the House of Commons.



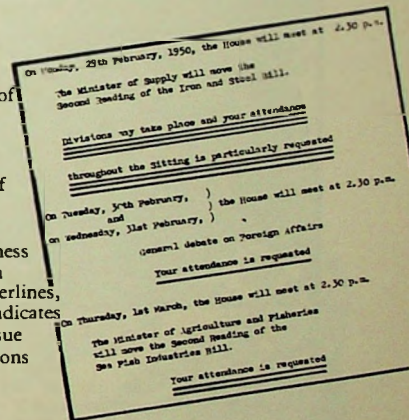
The Serjeant-at-Arms is responsible for the maintenance of order and discipline, the performance of ceremonial duties, and the general administration of the building. He is available, under direction from Mr. Speaker, to deal with unruly M.P.s.

The Mace is the symbol of the Royal authority. It is placed on a stand on the table in front of Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker has great authority in the House of Commons. He presides over debates and decides which amendments will be discussed and who shall speak (no M.P. may speak unless he "catches Mr. Speaker's eye"). He calls to order M.P.s who drift from the point and can order unruly M.P.s to withdraw from the chamber.

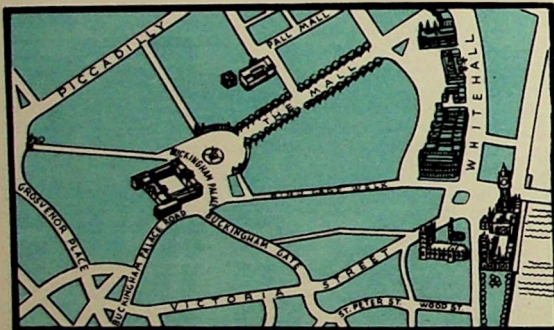
A "Whip" is the list of business for the week issued by the parties. Underlining is used to mark the importance of the business.

Routine business has one underlining, business which might produce a "division" has two underlines, a "three line Whip" indicates a division on a major issue and is an urgent summons to be present.



A "Whip" also means one of the members chosen by each party to superintend party discipline and organisation. They are usually present when the House is sitting and ensure that sufficient Members are present to vote for the party in a division. They are in constant touch with Members and tell the party leaders what the "back-bench" Members are thinking.

State Opening of Parliament



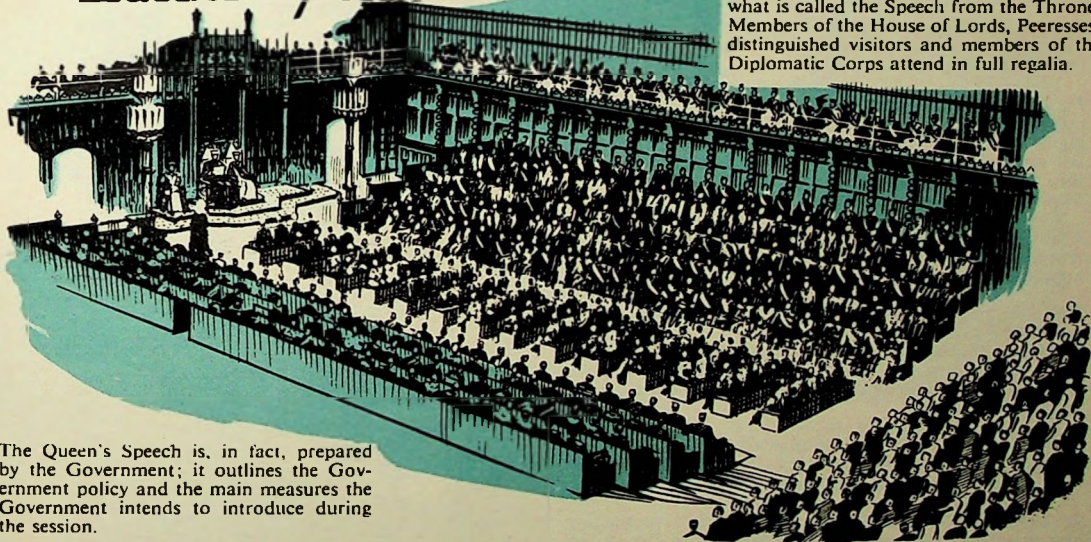
Each Parliamentary session (usually about a year) is officially opened by the Queen, who drives in State from Buckingham Palace, along the Mall, through Horse Guard's Parade, down Whitehall to the Houses of Parliament.

The Queen rides in the State Coach, preceded by a Sovereign's Escort of Household Cavalry. The procession is one of London's most colourful pageants.



The Queen's Speech

The opening ceremony takes place in the House of Lords, where the Queen reads what is called the Speech from the Throne. — Members of the House of Lords, Peeresses, distinguished visitors and members of the Diplomatic Corps attend in full regalia.



The Queen's Speech is, in fact, prepared by the Government; it outlines the Government policy and the main measures the Government intends to introduce during the session.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Commons are summoned by an official called "Black Rod." They stand at the Bar of the House of Lords to hear the speech.

The Debate on the Queen's Speech

Both Houses debate the Queen's Speech: the debate in the Commons is more important than that in the Lords as the Commons is the more powerful House.

For at least 350 years one of the first items of business in the new session in the House of Commons has been a first reading of the Outlawries Bill. This Bill never gets any further but symbolises the right of the Commons to discuss what they like before attending to the proposals of the Queen's Ministers.

The House then debates a motion phrased in traditional terms; in effect the Government is seeking the House's approval for the programme outlined in the Speech.

The motion is usually proposed and seconded by two back-bench M.P.s from the Government side. In the first two or three days of debate, anybody who can "catch Mr. Speaker's eye" can discuss the general policy of the Government. Then there may be several days during which formal amendments are discussed.

At the end of the full debate, which will have covered almost all aspects of Government policy, the motion for "A humble Address of Thanks" to Her Majesty is carried.

If M.P.s want to criticise the Government's programme, they may do so by tabling an amendment to the motion. Mr. Speaker decides which amendments he will "call" for discussion.



HIS MAJESTY'S
MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH
TO BOTH HOUSES OF
PARLIAMENT

DELIVERED ON
TUESDAY, 31st OCTOBER, 1951

LONDON
HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
PRINTED BY

Although the Government will continue to give maintain the essentials of their social policy, require as far as possible the stability of the export drive.

In order to defend full employment, community are used to best advantage to be introduced to make available to subject to appropriate Parliamentary distribution and consumption and to My Ministers propose the further both as a responsibility of local managements and workers. within

A Bill will be laid on the table for the purpose of removing convictions by court-martial from the list of offences for which a person may be asked to appear before a court.

You will be asked to apply in civilian employment on re-Service men who, before the voluntarily undertook an addi-

Legislation will be
devastated by ironstone co-
ordinated internal

The disturbed international efforts which My Ministry find at home. A Bill

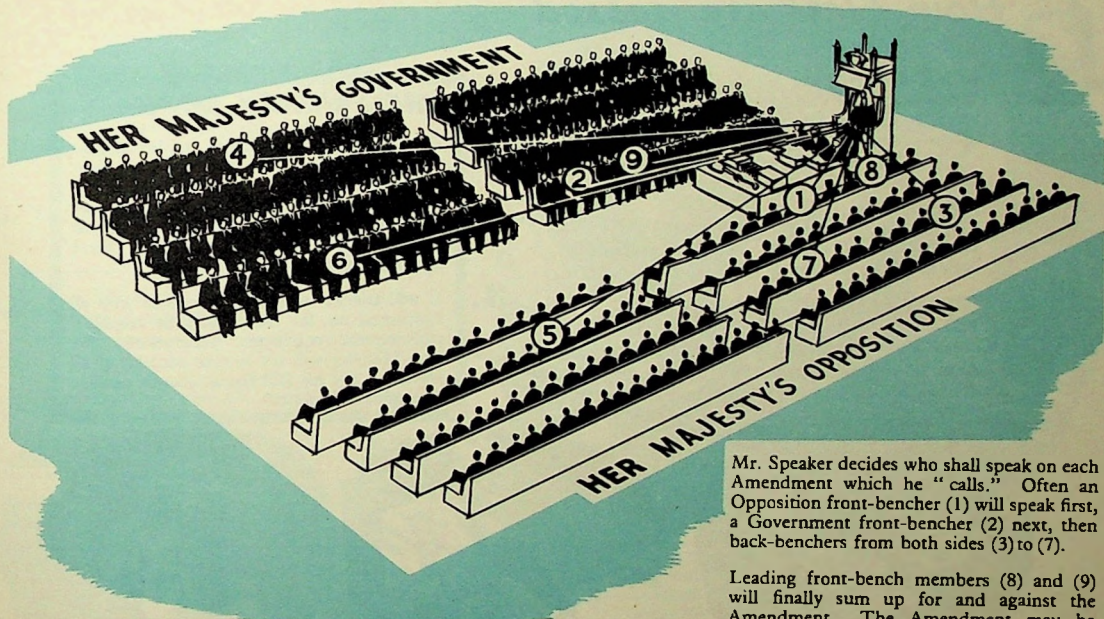
A measure will be laid before the House relating to the beet sugar industry. The Government will introduce legislation providing powers to reorganise and develop the industry. The Government will also introduce legislation providing powers to that authority.

A Bill will also be laid before you proposing more effective control of an authority with powers to regulate the fishing of salmon and trout in Scotland.

A Bill will be introduced in the House of Representatives on the subject of the Practice Act, 1942.

My Ministers have under consideration measures which will provide for the headsolds and meanwhile measures will be taken to provide for the headsolds for a short period of ground loans relating to otherwise similar provisions to prevent some of the hardships which would otherwise be the termination of tenancies. Provision will also be made for facilitating the renewal of certain business tenancies.

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels.



Mr. Speaker decides who shall speak on each Amendment which he "calls." Often an Opposition front-bencher (1) will speak first, a Government front-bencher (2) next, then back-benchers from both sides (3) to (7).

Leading front-bench members (8) and (9) will finally sum up for and against the Amendment. The Amendment may be withdrawn or pressed to a division.



How Acts are passed

A Bill is a proposal to change the law. When passed by Parliament it receives the Royal assent, and becomes an Act and part of the Law of the Land.

Bills may start in either House, but controversial Bills normally start in the Commons.

The House of Lords cannot hold up a money Bill and can only delay other Bills for about one year.

1. Bills are drawn up and guided through Parliament by the Minister directly concerned. For example, the Minister of Education would handle a Bill to raise the School-leaving age.



DISCUSSES



STUDIES



CONSULTS

PRELIMINARY WORK

2. The Minister would explain the broad proposals to his Civil Servants who, from their experience and records, would advise him of all the implications. Select Committees or Royal Commissions may have considered some of the problems before and these reports must be studied.
3. It will also be necessary to consult with all concerned in the Bill, such as teachers' associations, employers' federations, etc. The Minister will try to take account of all views so that his Bill has a smooth passage through Parliament.

B. The Treasury will be consulted if finance is involved and there will be discussions with other interested Government departments (i.e. the Ministry of Labour, Service Departments, etc.).

B. The Bill is then drafted by the legal experts.

B. The Cabinet decide which new Bills shall be introduced each session.



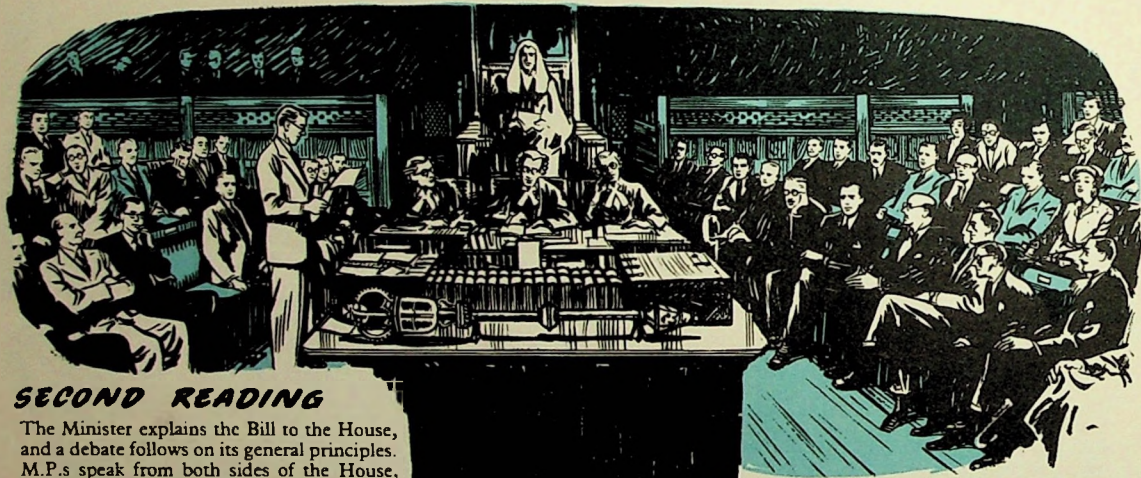
The stages of Bills are called Readings : so-called because in the days before printing, Bills had to be read aloud every time they were discussed.

FIRST READING

The Clerk of the House reads the title of the Bill and it is deemed to have been read a first time.

This is only a formal motion, always agreed to without a division. It means that the Bill is printed and distributed to M.P.s.

M.P.s study the broad implications of the Bill and the detailed clauses. They consult amongst themselves, amongst their constituencies, and with interested parties, preparing themselves for the main discussions on the Bill.



SECOND READING

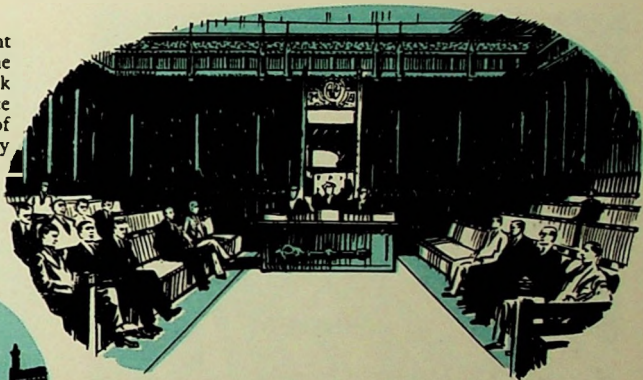
The Minister explains the Bill to the House, and a debate follows on its general principles. M.P.s speak from both sides of the House, giving their views. M.P.s may seek Mr. Speaker's permission to move amendments to improve or reject the Bill.

At the end of the debate, a government spokesman replies to points raised in the debate. He may agree to modify certain aspects of the Bill to meet M.P.s objections. Members may force a division on the motion that the Bill now be "read a second time."

COMMITTEE STAGE

The details of the Bill are examined clause by clause. Party politics are not so much in evidence because the purpose is now to improve the Bill: procedure is not so formal. Detailed amendments are proposed, argued about, and voted on. This stage may take several weeks.

Finance Bills and certain other important Bills are dealt with in "Committee of the Whole House." Mr. Speaker and the Clerk of the House leave their seats, and the Mace is put below the table. The Chairman of Ways and Means, who is also Deputy Speaker, presides.

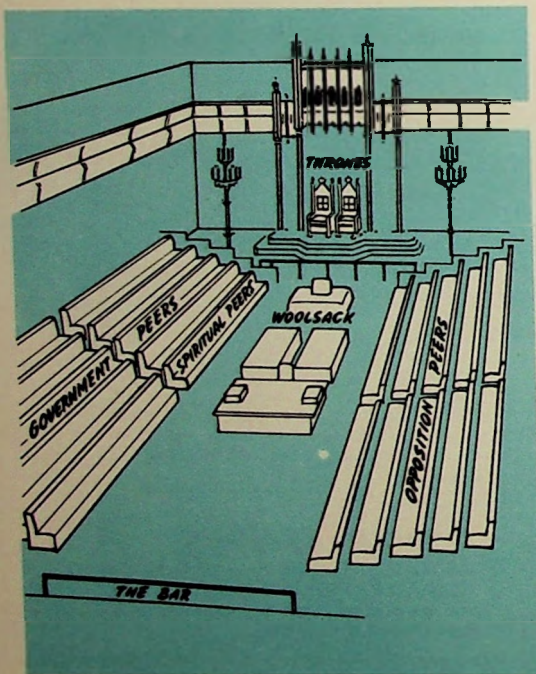


Other Bills are dealt with by Standing Committees "upstairs." These consist of about 40 M.P.s in roughly the same party proportion as in the whole House.

The Committees report back to the whole House, presided over by Mr. Speaker, on any changes which have been made to the Bill.

THIRD READING

The House then debates the motion that the Bill be read a third time. M.P.s make a final examination of the Bill before it passes on to the House of Lords.



THE HOUSE OF LORDS

In the Lords, the Bills are debated and frequently improved. The attendance in the Lords is usually not more than 100 members and sittings are much shorter than in the Commons. The standard of debate is very high because there are experts on almost every subject in the House of Lords.

The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod attends at the Bar of the House, and has duties similar to those of the Serjeant-at-Arms in the Commons.

The Lord Chancellor sits on the Woolsack and presides over the House. He is a member of the Government and, unlike Mr. Speaker, he may speak in debates and vote.

The Lords can revise Bills (except money Bills) and return them to the House of Commons. If the Commons do not accept the amendments, the Lords can only hold up a Bill for about one year. This delaying power can prevent the hasty passing of laws and gives time for public opinion to express itself.

The Lords are also the supreme Court of Appeal in our legal system. Appeals are heard by a small group of specially qualified Lords.

ROYAL ASSENT

A Bill does not become an Act until it has received Royal Assent, i.e., been approved by the Queen. No Sovereign has refused his or her assent since 1707 when Queen Anne refused to approve a Bill.

SUMMARY OF HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW

MINISTER

Preliminary consultations and discussions with Treasury, etc.

CABINET

approves draft and decides when it will be introduced.

Bill drafted by legal experts.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

1st Reading (formal).

Bill printed and circulated to Members.

2nd Reading (debate on general principles).

Committee stage (detailed consideration).

Report Stage.

3rd Reading (general debate).

HOUSE OF LORDS

Similar procedure. The House may accept it or return it with amendments.

After Royal Assent Bill becomes Law.

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1950 No. 968

SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

CONTROL OF BUILDING OPERATIONS

The Control of Building Operations (No. 15) Order, 1950

Made
Laid before Parliament
Coming into Operation

15th June, 1950
19th June, 1950
1st July, 1950

The Minister of Works, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by Regulation 56A of the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, as having effect as extended by the Supplies and Services (Transitional Powers) Act, 1945(a) and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf to do so, hereby orders as follows:—

1. In this Order a "designated building" means one or more of the buildings

DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Because of increasing calls on Parliamentary time, Parliament may empower a Minister to draw up and issue detailed regulations on technical matters. These are called Statutory Instruments and they have the full force of Law.

During times of national emergency, there are likely to be many such regulations.

All these are examined by a committee of the House, which reports to the House if any are not in order.



The Budget

The financial year begins on 1st April. Before that date each Government Department must prepare an estimate of its financial requirements during the coming year: these estimates are scrutinized by the Treasury and, if necessary, the Cabinet and are then printed and made available to Members of Parliament. Some time before 1st April, the House of Commons will be asked to authorize the expenditure on defence for the coming year and to make a "vote on account" for the other Departments so that they can keep going until they have been properly authorized to spend money.

Early in the new financial year the Chancellor of the Exchequer will present the Budget to the House of Commons. He will review the state of the national finances and propose changes in taxation for the coming year.

At the same time, a Committee on Estimates will examine the Estimates in detail and report if any economies could be made.

After the House of Commons has examined the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it will authorize the new taxes and the issue of money to the Government. This usually happens before the summer recess. Supplementary Estimates of any additional expenditure needed may be presented, and these will be examined during the autumn and winter.

After the end of the financial year, proper accounts are prepared of all income received and expenditure incurred. These are examined by the Comptroller and Auditor General who is not an ordinary civil servant but an officer of the House of Commons. He audits the accounts in just the same way as a professional auditor examines the accounts of an ordinary business concern.

His reports are then considered by a committee of the House of Commons called the Public Accounts Committee which is always presided over by a member of the Opposition. This Committee reports to the House whether the money has been properly spent and draws attention to any extravagance.

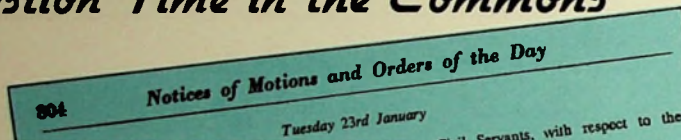
The House of Commons has the sole responsibility for authorizing the Government to spend money and to impose taxes and duties needed to raise the money. When considering financial matters it meets as a Committee of the Whole House. The Committee of Supply is concerned with the Expenditure side of the account, the Committee of Ways and Means with the Revenue side.

When the House is meeting as a Committee of Supply, it is the custom to allow the Opposition to choose the subject to be debated (i.e. the Department whose financial requirements shall be considered). Twenty-six days a year are set aside for this purpose.

<i>The Nation's Finances</i>											
<i>Expenditure</i>						<i>Revenue</i>					
<i>£millions</i>						<i>£millions</i>					
Interest on National Debt	...	...	...	...	490	Income Tax	...	...	...	...	1,450
Defence	...	...	...	...	950	Surtax	...	...	...	...	115
Secret Service	...	...	...	...	3	Death Duties	...	...	...	...	189
Foreign Office, Colonies, Commonwealth Relations	...	...	...	...	97	Profits Tax	...	...	...	...	297
Health and Housing	...	...	...	...	436	Stamp Duties	...	...	...	...	51
Contribution to Local Rates	...	...	...	...	56	Customs and Excise :					
Police and Prisons	...	...	...	...	32	Alcoholic Drinks	...	...	...	...	401
Food Subsidies	...	...	...	...	423	Tobacco	...	...	...	...	610
National Insurance, National Assistance and Pensions	...	...	...	...	393	Purchase Tax	...	...	...	...	282
Roads, Civil Aviation, and Transport	...	...	...	...	80	Entertainments	...	...	...	...	44
Public Buildings	...	...	...	...	47	Betting	...	...	...	...	26
Payment to Northern Ireland	...	...	...	...	36	Motor Vehicle Duties	...	...	...	...	55
Miscellaneous expenses	...	...	...	...	501	Miscellaneous receipts	...	...	...	...	572
Surplus	...	...	...	...	548						
					4,092						4,092

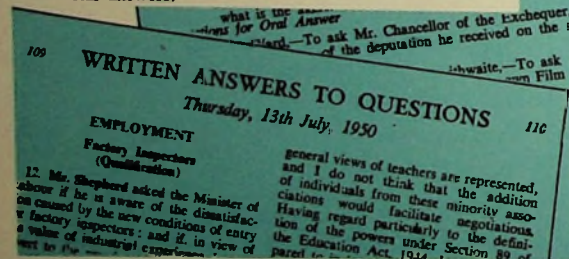
This Balance Sheet is a simplified form of the national account with typical figures.

Question Time in the Commons



Any Member can put a question to a Minister about anything for which that Minister is responsible. Ordinary questions must be submitted in writing to one of the three "Clerks at the Table" at least two days before.

Questions cover a wide range: they may raise a personal grievance of an individual in the M.P.'s constituency or raise issues of urgent national or international importance. Questions to be answered each day are printed on the "Order Paper," and an hour is given (except on Fridays) for Ministerial answers.



Between forty and fifty questions a day are answered orally. Those not reached in the hour are answered the same day in writing.

PROCEDURE

Mr. Speaker calls the name of the Questioner.

The Member reads the number of the question on the Order Paper.

After the Minister's reply, Mr. Speaker may allow a few supplementary questions which arise directly from the main question. If the Member is not satisfied with the Minister's reply he may give notice to "raise the matter on the adjournment."

Daily Adjournment

At the end of each day, half an hour is set aside for a debate taken on the formal Motion "that this House do now adjourn." No reference is made during the debate to whether the House will adjourn or not—this is just a convenient method of debating some subject which cannot easily be put in a formal motion.

M.P.'s must draw lots for the right to "raise a matter on the adjournment." New legislation may not be discussed. The debate is started by an M.P. and a Government spokesman replies.

Quiz



Parliament does not only make laws : it criticizes and controls the Government, drawing attention to grievances great and small, supervising the administration of the land, checking extravagant spending, and expressing to the Government of the day the opinions of the Nation's citizens.

Your M.P. is your Spokesman in the House, even if you did not vote for him. He must vote and speak according to his own conscience, but he will be influenced by the opinions of his constituents.

In some countries there have never been Parliaments : in others Parliaments have been abolished by tyrannical rulers. It could happen here. It can only be avoided if Parliament is valued and respected. Parliament is open to the public, and the daily report of every word said in Parliament (Hansard) can be consulted at your library or ordered through any bookseller.

1. Why does Parliament meet in a Royal Palace ?
2. Approximately how many Members of the House of Commons are there at present (1955) ?
3. Are there any Peers in the House of Commons ?
4. Are there any Members of the House of Lords who, when they die, do not transmit to their eldest sons the right to be summoned to the Lords ?
5. How much money does a parliamentary candidate have to deposit with the Returning Officer before an election ?
6. Does the candidate forfeit this deposit ?
7. At what age do men become entitled to vote ?
8. Is it the same for women ?
9. Who appoints the Prime Minister ?
10. Who chooses the Members of the Cabinet ?
11. Who appoints the Speaker of the House of Commons ?
12. What is the title of the Speaker of the House of Lords ?
13. Approximately how many Cabinet Ministers are there nowadays ?
14. Who reads the Queen's Speech ?
15. Who writes the Queen's Speech ?
16. What is the difference between a Bill and an Act ?
17. How many " readings " does a Bill normally have ?
18. To whom are Parliamentary Questions addressed ?
19. On what date does the Government's financial year begin ?
20. Which Minister introduces the Budget ?



Some Definitions

Adjournment

At the end of each day's Sitting the House of Commons adjourns until the time appointed for the next Sitting.

Prorogation

When a session of Parliament is at an end (usually after one year), the House is prorogued and this automatically "kills" all bills which have not passed all their stages.

Recess

The period between the prorogation of Parliament and the State opening of a New Session is called a recess, and the word recess is also used colloquially to describe the short breaks at Christmas and Easter and other times during the Session.

Dissolution

If a general election is held before a Parliament has run the full period of five years, then Parliament is dissolved.

Answers to Quiz

1. Because formerly Parliament was summoned by the King to meet in the place most convenient to him, which was usually his own residence.
2. Just over 600.
3. Yes. For example, those Irish Peers who are not entitled to sit in the Lords can be elected to sit in the House of Commons.
4. Yes. Archbishops, Bishops, Law Lords and Scottish and Irish Representative Peers.
5. £150.
6. Only if he fails to secure at least one-eighth of the votes cast in the constituency.
7. 21.
8. Yes.
9. The Queen.
10. The Prime Minister.
11. The House of Commons.
12. The Lord Chancellor.
13. 16—20.
14. Usually the Queen; but if she is absent, the Lord Chancellor.
15. It is prepared and approved by the Cabinet and is a statement of Government policy.
16. A Bill is a proposal to change the Law; when it has passed through the various stages in the two Houses of Parliament and has received the Royal Assent, it becomes an Act and is part of the Law of the Land.
17. Six. Three in each House.
18. Usually to the Minister responsible for the matter about which the Question is asked—for example, a Question about schools to the Minister of Education, or one about the R.A.F. to the Secretary of State for Air.
19. 1st April.
20. The Chancellor of the Exchequer.

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